will be posted in the eight lower grade and the two higher grade vernacular training schools for boys to instruct pupil teachers in the method of teaching Hygiene.

21. Education.—Special attention was paid during the year to the expansion and improvement of education in all its branches. As foreshadowed in my address last year, a special conference of officials and non-officials was held in April last to consider the report of the Education Expenditure Committee and the *interim* report of the Committee appointed for the revision of the curricula of studies in vernacular schools for boys. This conference, after a careful consideration and full discussion of the several issues raised in the two reports, arrived at certain final conclusions which were accepted and sanctioned by the Government in their order No. 1034 of 1921/L & L. G., dated the 18th July 1921. The most important among the decisions of the conference were (1) that primary education should continue to be free and that the goal of universal primary education should be reached by the State as quickly as possible ; (2) that English should be taught as a compulsory subject in vernacular middle schools, the staff thereof being strengthened to the necessary extent ; (3) that elementary manual training should be introduced in primary schools and the higher forms of manual training in vernacular middle schools ; (4) that the increase in grants to primary school teachers announced by me at the last session of the Assembly was not adequate and that more liberal grants should be awarded to private schools, both English and vernacular, to encourage private effort ; (5) that the salaries of teachers, especially of primary school teachers, should be enhanced ; and (6) that with a view to meet the additional expenditure involved in the improvements suggested, the fees in vernacular middle and English schools as well as colleges should be suitably increased. Other decisions of the conference are also dealt with in that G. O., but it is not necessary for me to recapitulate them here, beyond stating that the conference expressed itself strongly against the introduction of vocational training in institutions which are intended for general education. In regard to manual training, Government have recently ordered that the under-graduate teachers who are now employed as instructors in manual training in the ten departmental vernacular training schools for boys should be retained there to impart instruction to the pupil teachers coming up to those institutions for training, that 200 teachers who have received the necessary instruction in manual training should be posted, one to each departmental vernacular middle school, where they should teach simple forms of manual training in classes I to IV and the higher forms of the same in classes V and VI, that an attempt should be made to introduce gradually elementary manual training in the primary schools also, by the appointment in them of trained teachers who have received instruction in manual training, and that it would be enough to introduce manual training into English schools after the system has been perfected in vernacular schools. A liberal scheme of scholarships and freeships is under preparation, and the provisions of this scheme are calculated to help the really poor and deserving portion of the pupils in vernacular middle and English schools. A scheme for the medical inspection of pupils in recognised English schools by qualified medical officers has been formulated and the draft rules on the subject have been published in the Gazette with a view to elicit public criticism. This scheme will be introduced with effect from the beginning of the next school year and it is likely to cost the Government a sum of about Rs. 5,000 per annum. As promised by me last year, steps are being taken for the establishment of a chair for the teaching of Natural Science in His Highness the Maha Raja's College with effect from the beginning of the next academical year. A hostel for women was recently attached to the Women's College.

22. Students' Strikes.—The educational expenditure of the Government is going up rapidly. It was Rs. 25·83 lakhs in 1095 and Rs. 29·90 lakhs in 1096 ; it is estimated at Rs. 32·21 lakhs in 1097, but the actuals are bound to exceed even this figure. In pursuance of the decision of the Conference that the fees in vernacular middle and English schools ought to be raised in view to find a fraction at least of the additional funds required to give effect to its recommendations, Government resolved to increase by 50 per cent. the fees in the vernacular schools where English was proposed to be compulsorily taught and by half a rupee each per mensem the

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

fees in the preparatory class and in Forms IV to VI of English schools. The proposed increase, however, was actually brought into effect only in the case of English schools. This event, as you all know, furnished the occasion for those unfortunate exhibitions of organised indiscipline on the part of the student population in Trivandrum and elsewhere in Chingam last. The students' strikes at Trivandrum and the riot of the 5th Kanni in the college square in which they culminated have been the cause of so much agitation and excitement in the country that they deserve more than a passing notice. A certain section of the vernacular press has been keeping the agitation going, and insistent demands have been made from certain quarters for the appointment of a committee of enquiry. I would venture to ask of you a responsible and dispassionate analysis of the situation. I have, on another occasion, adduced fully the reasons that weighed with the Government in enhancing the fees for secondary education to a level which, by the way, is not in excess of that reached in the neighbouring State of Cochin. Assuming for the sake of argument that the Government were wrong in having done so, and that the committee on whose considered and weighty advice they acted was neither representative nor responsible, the remedy for those who thought so, clearly lay in convincing the Government, through constitutional channels, of their error. This was not done; but on the contrary the school-boys were allowed to champion their own cause and they went on strike. Had they stopped with this, nothing more than a disciplinary notice of their conduct would have been called for. But it is an undisputed fact that the strikers soon assumed a militant attitude and molested peaceful students and law-abiding citizens. Government conveyed warnings in the shape of Press Communiqués and the District Magistrate of Trivandrum issued a prohibitory order. These preventive measures had no effect on the strikers and their sympathisers, who organised a second strike on even a larger scale than before with a more pronounced outburst of lawlessness, and this culminated in the unlawful assemblage of a very large number of school-boys and others in the college square on the 5th Kanni and in open acts of violence in defiance of constituted authority. No Government could allow such lawlessness and the rioters had to be dispersed by force, which in the present instance, however, was only employed by way of self-defence. That the force so used was not excessive is proved conclusively by the absence of any serious injuries among the rioters. The earlier stories of broken limbs have proved to be as much a myth as the later one of the death, after more than a month of the event, of a school boy as the result of injuries sustained by him during the riot. The evidence in this case shows that the boy died, not as the result of injuries, but of typhoid fever. There is again a conspicuous absence of complaints from persons said to have been injured during the riot, and in the case of two members of the College staff who were reported to have been roughly handled by the Police, although they were invited to adduce evidence, they abstained from doing so. The solitary complaint lodged by a College student before the First Class Magistrate, Trivandrum, had to be thrown out by him, on the complainant himself admitting that the assembly in which he participated was an unlawful one. It was not his case that excessive force was used for the dispersal of that assembly, and it is on record that the injury sustained by him was only trivial. If there was any one who had received any serious injury, nothing prevented him from coming forward and producing the necessary evidence. These are the broad, outstanding facts of the case, and after a repeated and anxious consideration, Government are unable to find in them any justification for the appointment of a committee of enquiry. No one deplores the strikes and their aftermath more than the Government themselves. It is not the intention of Government to negative the possibility of individual excesses on occasions of this kind, and I would avail myself of this opportunity to convey to you the assurance that both Government and their responsible officers have ever been and still are most anxious to visit with condign punishment every such case of excess in the event of its being properly proved.

23. Efficiency of Administration.—In my address last year, I foreshadowed the action that I proposed to take with a view to increase the efficiency of the services by improving their salaries and prospects and revising the methods of their work, and to keep down expenditure by effecting retrenchments wherever possible. The decision to appoint an Efficiency Audit Officer to examine the conditions

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly